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**WASHINGTON, DC** - Congressman Mike Pence made the following statement today regarding

the health care debate on Capitol Hill and President Obama's small business announcement:

**"Now that health care reform has moved out of the public eye and into the smoke-filled rooms here on Capitol Hill, Republicans are more determined than ever to make sure the American people know exactly what the impact of the Democrats' plan to launch a government takeover of health care will mean to Americans in every sector of our society.**

**"This week, particularly, Republicans are focusing on the impact on small businesses.**

**"Today the President of the United States will head to Maryland to announce the plan to use a portion of the Wall Street bailout to support additional loans to small business America. Judging from the impact that the Democrats' health care plan will have on small business, it sounds like small businesses are going to need the help.**

**"The facts are that small businesses today represent 99 percent of all businesses in this country and have created more than 72 percent of all the jobs in this country in recent years. Nevertheless, the Democrats' health care plan includes \$820 billion in higher taxes, including a \$544 billion so-called 'surtax on the rich.'**

**"But a careful examination of that definition shows that more than half of the Americans who are included in the Democrats' planned "surtax" are actually small business owners filing as individuals. Two hundred billion dollars plus in the Democrats' plan will also be new taxes on businesses that can't afford to pay for their employee health care plans. The reality is, when you look at the extraordinary impact of the tax increases on small business America in this country, I just have to feel that the president offering bailout funds to small businesses while pushing a government takeover of health care is like getting a Christmas bonus right before you get a pink slip.**

**"Republicans have a better plan. The Republican plan will create more jobs and more opportunity and more choices in health care while containing cost and increasing access. We look forward to Democrats bringing health care reform out of the back rooms, out of the smoke-filled rooms, and engage in a truly bipartisan process that will put the interests of our economy, including our small businesses, in the forefront."**